(b) how many coir-based industrial units are at present in the sick list in each State; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to reactivise the sick coir-based industrial units in each State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Pay Body for Public Sector employees

529. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI T. R. BALU:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to news item captioned "Officers of Central Undertakings stage Dharna" which appeared in the Hindu dated the 2nd July, 1988;

(b) the date on which Government appointed the high power committee to recommend pay scales for such officers and what were its terms of reference and also the names of its members;

(c) how many times in the past its terms were extended with details thereof;

(d) by when it is expected to submit its report;

(e) how much amount has been paid to the members of the Committee as yet; and

(f) how many instalments of interim relief have been released by Government so far to the public sector employees and officials pending the pay revision and whether there is any proposal to give any more relief to them; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Committee was constituted by the Government vide Ministry of Industry (BPE's) Resolution dated 7-4-1986. The Committee is headed by Mr. Justice R. B. Misra. Shri B. P. R. Vithal is the other Member of the Committee. The terms of reference of the Committee are given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below).

(c) and (d) The Committee has sought two extensions i.e. one from 1-12-1987 to 30-6-1988 and the second from 1-7-1988 to 30-11-1988. The report is expected by 30-11-1988.

(e) A sum of Rs. 1,76,970 has been spent by way of salary/sitting fees of the Members of the Committee.

(f) Three instalments of interim relief based on the recommendations of the HPPC contained in their first and second reports have been released by the Government.

Statement

Terms of Reference of the Committee

I. To examine the present structure of emoluments and conditions of service taking into account the total packet of benefits in cash and kind, available to the workers, clerical staff, supervisors and officers, below the Board level following the Central DA pattern and to suggest changes which may be desirable and feasible.

II. To examine the variety of allowances and benefits in kind that are presently available to the above noted employees in addition to pay and DA and suggest rationalisation, simplification thereof with a view to promoting efficiency.

III. To examine matters relating to grant of interim relief to the employees of all such public enterprises (belonging to the

Government of India and following the Central DA pattern), who are drawing basic pay above Rs. 1000 per month and grant necessary relief to them, if called for as expeditiously as possible; but in any event not later than one month from the date of assumption of the office.

IV. While making recommendations on the above points, the Committee would keep in view other related factors such as scales of pay, DA and allowances, prevailing in other public sector undertakings conditions in the country, resources available on industrial DA formula, economic at the disposal of these public enterprises.

Sick cement industry

530. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that continuing deterioration in the financial position of the existing cement manufacturing units has given a jolt to the long term investment plan for the cement industry and has caused great concern for Government's ambitious plan of National Housing Programme;

(b) how many cement industries have been closed down in the country during the last three years; and

(c) what are the package of proposals offered by Government for reviving the sick cement industry in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) Representations have been received from cement industry that a number of cement factories are facing financial problems owing to increase in cost of inputs and fall in market price of non-levy cement. This could be due to temporary recession in demand as a result of severe drought in many States. It is too early to assess if the present present condition will have any impact on long-term investment plan.

As a result of the various steps taken by the Government, the production of cement has increased considerably. It has gone up from 18.56 million tonnes in 1980-81 to 39.30 million tonnes in 1987-88. It is expected that in spite of financial constraints the production target for the Seventh Five Year Plan is also likely to be achieved. Thus, there is no likelihood of any adverse impact on Government's Plan of National Housing Programme.

(b) Among the large cement plants, during the last 3 years, Sone Valley Portland Cement Company Ltd., Japan, in Bihar, has been closed since September, 1985, due to financial problems. Other cement plants like Dwarka Cement Works and Jaipur Udyog Ltd. have been closing down and resuming operations. Jaipur Udyog Ltd., is, however, closed since 1st July, 1988. The cement factory of Rohtas Industries Ltd. and Sewree cement plant of Shree Digvijay Cement Company Limited have been lying closed for more than three years.

(c) Government have taken the following steps for reviving the sick cement units and improving the economic viability of the cement industry as a whole:—

(i) Sickness benefit in respect of certain units declared sick has been recently extended further;

(ii) Levy obligation of sick cement units has been reduced from 30 per cent to 15 per cent of actual production with effect from 1-3-88;

(iii) Levy obligation of pre-1982 units has been reduced from 50 per cent to 30 per cent of actual production with effect from 1-3-88;

(iv) Levy obligation of units which commenced production sometimes prior to 1-1-1982 but deemed to have started their production after 1-1-1982, has been reduced from 30 per cent to 20 per cent of actual production with effect from 1-3-88;

(v) In March/April, 1987, a rebate in excise duty to the extent of Rs. 20 per tonne and Rs. 50 per tonne had been given in respect of new units which